

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 3016

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PL, VT

SUBJECT: CASAROLI'S CONVERSATIONS IN WARSAW

REF: ROME 2565; STATE 038437; WARSAW 1097

SUMMARY: CASAROLI MANAGED TO TOUCH ALL IMPORTANT POINTS AT ISSUE BETWEEN CHURCH AND GOP BUT NO QUESTIONS DISCUSSED IN DEPTH. MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS WERE DECISIONS TO HOLD FUTURE TALKS ON REGULAR BASIS, TO USE FONOFF AS MAJOR INTERLOCUTER AND TO GIVE VOICE TO POLISH HIERARCHY. DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS NOT DISCUSSED. END SUMMARY.

1. ARCHBISHOP CASAROLI HAS CONFIRMED TO US THAT MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HIS RECENT WARSAW VISIT WERE DECISIONS TO HOLD FUTURE TALKS ON REGULAR BASIS, TO DESIGNATE POLISH FOREIGN MINISTRY AS PRINCIPLE INTERLOCUTER, AND TO ASSURE THAT POLISH HIERARCHY HAS VOICE IN ANY DECISIONS TAKEN. WITHOUT HOLDING DETAILED DISCUSSION AT ANY POINT, CASAROLI WAS ABLE TO ENUMERATE
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ALL MAJOR QUESTIONS WHICH SHOULD BE COVERED IN FUTURE CONVERSA-

TIONS: LEGAL STATUS FOR CHURCH IN POLAND AND TAXATION, CHURCH CONSTRUCTION, SEMINARIES, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS, AND REGULARIZATION OF DIVIDED EASTERN DIOCESES. QUESTION OF EVENTUAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS DID NOT ARISE. CASAROLI SAID HE FELT THIS WAS A LONG WAY OFF AND THAT, MOREOVER, PROGRESS ON OTHER POINTS WOULD ONLY BE AFTER LONG AND SLOW PROCESS. ALTHOUGH SOVIETS PROBABLY NOT OPPOSED IN PRINCIPLE TO SEEING BLOC ALLIES ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH HOLY SEE, CASAROLI SAID HE NOT SANGUINE THAT PRICE WOULD BE IN RANGE VATICAN WILLING TO PAY.

2. CASAROLI SAID HE TOLD HIS POLISH HOSTS THAT ONE OF VATICAN'S MAIN CONCERNS IS TO END PRESENT ANOMALOUS SITUATION IN WHICH CHURCH OPERATES ON OFFICIAL SUFFERANCE RATHER THAN WITH ANY LEGAL GUARANTEES OR RIGHTS. THIS PLACES PARTICULARLY ONEROUS TAX BURDEN ON CHURCH RESULTING FREQUENTLY IN DOUBLE TAXATION. POLISH OFFICIALS SAID THAT UNDER SOCIALIST LAW IT DIFFICULT TO CONSIDER CHURCH MUCH DIFFERENT FROM PRIVATE ASSOCIATION, BUT CASAROLI STRESSED TO THEM THAT HE HOPEFUL SPECIAL HISTORIC ROLE AND PRESENT CONTRIBUTIONS OF POLISH CHURCH WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO LOCATE MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY FORMULA.

3. CASAROLI DENIED THAT MINDSZENTY'S REMOVAL WAS TIMED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MAKE AN IMPACT ON GOP OR OTHER SOCIALIST GOVERNMENTS. ANNOUNCEMENT WAS PURPOSELY MADE LATE FEB. 5 WHEN OFFICIAL PORTION OF CASAROLI'S WARSAW VISIT ALMOST CONCLUDED, WHEN IT WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE NO EFFECT ON COURSE OF TALKS. CASAROLI SAID ALL GOP OFFICIALS HE DEALT WITH, WHOM HE LABELLED "VERY GENTLEMANLY," ABSTAINED FROM MENTIONING MINDSZENTY, OR FROM MAKING ANY POINTED OR INSIDIOUS REFERENCES TO CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI AND POLISH BISHOPS. CASAROLI SAID HE AWARE, HOWEVER, NOW THAT HIS VISIT CONCLUDED, GOP WILL ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT IT FOR PROPAGANDA VALUE ESPECIALLY ATTEMPTING TO DEMONSTRATE THAT DIVISION EXISTS BETWEEN VATICAN AND POLISH HIERARCHY.

4. FACT THAT WYSZYNSKI UNQUESTIONABLY VERY SATISFIED WITH CONDUCT CASAROLI'S LATEST TALKS IN POLAND SHOULD, CASAROLI SAID, DO MUCH TO DAMPEN RUMORS ALLEGING DIVISION BETWEEN ROME AND POLISH CHURCH. ALTHOUGH VATICAN HAS LITTLE DIFFICULTY EXPLAINING ITS POSITIONS TO POLISH BISHOPS AND CONVINCING THEM OF ADVISABILITY OF OSTPOLITIK, ONCE BACK IN POLAND SAME BISHOPS HAVE HABIT

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OF FALLING VICTIM TO PROPAGANDA, CASAROLI EXPLAINED. HE OBSERVED THAT SOME GERMAN BISHOPS ALSO SPREAD A BIT OF PANIC IN POLISH CHURCH CIRCLES. CASAROLI DOUBTED THAT ANY SERIOUS OBSERVER WOULD MAKE AN ANALOGY BETWEEN MINDSZENTY CASE AND WYSZYNSKI. WYSZYNSKI PERFECTLY WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH GOP PROVIDED BASIC NEEDS OF CHURCH RESPECTED AND GUARANTEED, WHEREAS MINDSZENTY EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO REFUSE TO ADMIT THAT THERE WAS A GOVERNMENT IN HUNGARY.

5. QUESTION OF THREE DIOCESES DIVIDED BETWEEN POLAND AND USSR NOT DISCUSSED, BUT IT ON AGENDA FOR FUTURE. CASAROLI SAID HE SUSPECTS GOP WOULD PREFER PROBLEM WOULD GO AWAY SINCE, AS GOOD POLISH NATIONALISTS, THEY WOULD PROBABLY SURRENDER ONLY WITH GREATEST RELUCTANCE ANYTHING SMACKING OF A POLISH TERRITORIAL CLAIM.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH VATICAN OSTPOLITIK PROBABLY HOLDS GREATEST PROSPECTS FOR ACHIEVING SOME REASONABLE GAINS IN POLAND AND HUNGARY, CASAROLI APPEARS TO HARBOR NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT JUST WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED AND HOW FAST. SINCE SOVIET UNION IS MAIN OBSTACLE TO MANY DIFFICULTIES CHURCH EXPERIENCES IN EASTERN EUROPE, QUITE OBVIOUSLY NO GREAT GAINS POSSIBLE WITHOUT SOVIET APPROVAL OR, IN LONG RUN, WITHOUT SOVIET PARTICIPATION. BASED ON HIS LONG EXPERIENCE WITH SOVIETS, CASAROLI TELLS US HE HAS LITTLE HOPE IN ANY GENUINE RELAXATION OF SOVIET ANTI-RELIGIOUS POLICY. VOLPE

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